



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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DEQ and its partners arrest water system operator from West Monroe

BATON ROUGE – The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality Criminal Investigation Division, along with local, state and federal partners, arrested Jeffrey Pruett, 57, on 17 felony charges involving violations of his water discharge permit. He was arrested today and faces fines of up to \$50,000 per charge and up to three years in prison per charge. Pruett was president and CEO of Louisiana Land and Water Company and the Principal Officer of LWC Management Company, which face the same felony charges.

Pruett operates more than 30 public water supply system units and wastewater treatment units in eastern Louisiana. Pruett is alleged to have violated his Louisiana Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit by not providing monitoring results, violating effluent discharge limits set forth in the permit, operating without a permit, having unpermitted discharges and failing to provide proper operation and maintenance for this units.

“It’s troubling when criminal enforcement actions have to be taken to protect human health and the environment,” said DEQ Secretary Harold Leggett. “However, we are fortunate to have partners like those at EPA-CID, Louisiana State Police and in the U.S. Attorney’s Office who also take environmental regulations seriously.”

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Criminal Investigation Division, the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Western District, DEQ, Louisiana State Police and the Ouachita Parish Sheriff’s Office cooperated in the case.

Pruett also faces civil penalties for violations relating to his water discharge permit.

An arrest does not constitute guilt in a criminal case. All evidence compiled during the investigation is presented to the area prosecutors who determine if formal charges are warranted.

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